NATION

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Texan claims his father fired shots that killed JFK

By Hugh Aynesworth
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

DALLAS — A 29-year-old Midland, Texas, man charged here yesterday that his father, a former Dallas policeman, was a CIA hit man who fired the shots that killed President Kennedy in 1963.

Ricky White, an unemployed oil equipment salesman who has been trying to peddle the story for at least a year through several unnamed Texas businessmen, told a packed news conference here that his father, Roscoe White — who died in a 1971 fire — joined the Dallas Police Department shortly before the assassination just to handle the job.

Mr. White said yesterday that his father, shooting from the infamous "grassy knoll" area ahead of the presidential motorcade, fired two of three shots that hit Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963. He said his father also killed Dallas policeman J.D. Tippitt as he and Lee Harvey Oswald were rushing to Red Bird Airport in Mr. Tippitt's car to leave town.

He claimed that Oswald fired no shots at all and that Oswald and Officer Tippitt were "patsies."

Ricky White also named two other "shooters," code-named "Saul" and "Lebanon," who he said had fired at Kennedy. Roscoe White's code was "Mandarin," he said. Saul and Lebanon were CIA operatives stationed in the Texas School Book Depository Building and the County Records Building overlooking Dealey Plaza, he said.

He added that his mother, Geneva White, overheard a plot to kill Kennedy while working as a barmaid at Jack Ruby's nightclub a few weeks before the assassination. She told nobody, he said, because Ruby threatened to kill her if she did.

Ricky White said his mother "has had four shock treatments and cannot be questioned."

The Rev. Jack Shaw of suburban Richardson also was at the news conference, held at the JFK Assassination Information Bureau, which sells conspiracy materials about the tragedy, and said Mrs. White had told him what she overheard.

"These allegations — that this was done on CIA orders, that this guy worked for us and that CIA had any role in the assassination of President Kennedy — are ludicrous," CIA spokesman Mark Mansfield said in Washington.

Roscoe White never worked for the CIA, Mr. Mansfield said. "Normally, we never confirm nor deny employment, but these allegations are so outrageous that we felt it necessary and appropriate to respond," he said.

The FBI said in a brief statement that it had received the same information in 1988 but "determined that this information is not credible."

The Warren Commission concluded that Oswald, acting alone, fired the shots that killed Kennedy and wounded John Connally, then Texas governor. Despite the findings, conspiracy theories have abounded since the assassination.

Ricky White showed reporters documents that he said would buttress his claims. Among those items were embarcation slips showing that both Roscoe White and Oswald had left on the same ship for Marine duty in Japan on Aug. 22, 1957. He submitted three faded messages he claimed were sent by U.S. intelligence officials ordering the killing of Kennedy.

But Bobby Ray Inman, former CIA deputy director, said after examining the "messages" that they are not legitimate. "My reaction is that it's a forgery of some kind, or invalid," he told the Austin American-Statesman last week.

Ricky White said he discovered his father's role in the killing 12 years ago and had difficulty accepting it — particularly, he explained, because Officer Tippitt and his father were close friends.

Earlier this year, Ricky White and his agent, Chuck Neighbors of San Antonio, met with The Washington Times for several hours at the behest of a New York publishing house, which had been contacted by Mr. Neighbors.

The New York editor urged a writer for The Times to "examine the validity of what Mr. White claims" and determine if he wanted to write a book with Ricky White about the charges.

This Times reporter — who has written about the Kennedy assassination since the day he witnessed it — investigated several of the White claims and then told the New York editor that he was not interested — that he did not believe the story.

JERRY O'LEARY?

Since the discussions with The Times, Ricky White has come up with further documentation and allegations, including:

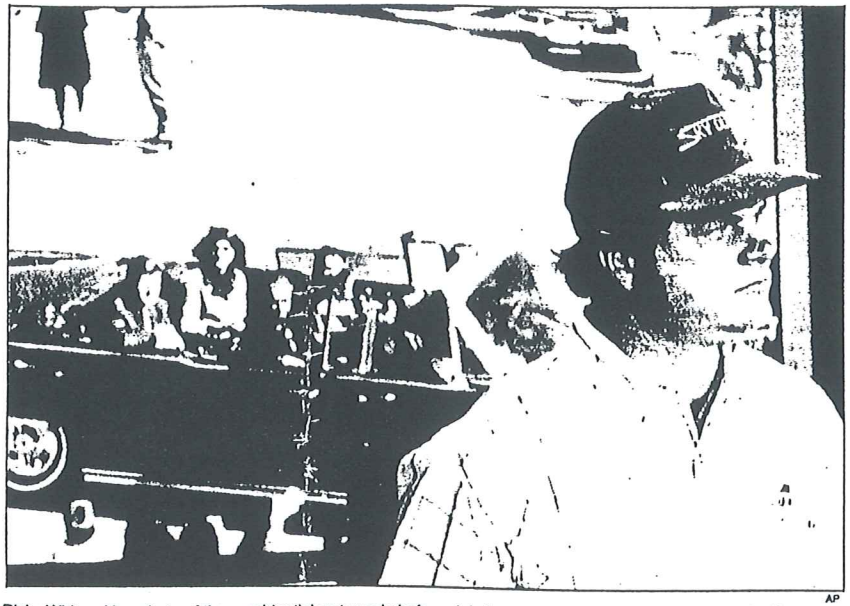
- That he had read his father's diary and understood what it meant, but that an FBI agent had taken it and he has not seen it since. Previously, the only reference to the FBI having any materials of his was when he said an agent had read some notes and he could not find them later. Nothing was ever mentioned about a diary, nothing remotely touching on admissions about killing Officer Tippitt, or Oswald not even firing a shot.
- That Mrs. White heard a plot with Ruby saying, "I will take care of Oswald," and her husband replying, "I will take care of the president and I will take care of Tippitt."
- That he had additional information linking his father to the CIA. The Times reporter was told by Ricky White the only thing that caused his belief his father was a CIA agent was a friend living like a "barricaded hermit" in a West Texas town, who is no longer mentioned.

There appear to be many holes in the latest scenario, including:

- Officer Tippitt was known to have been farther away from the city and was pulled in closer by his dispatcher as police searched for the assassin. He could not have been downtown, hurrying Oswald and Roscoe White out to an airport.
- When Ricky White said his father fired two telling shots, including one to Kennedy's throat, he was parroting several conspiracy theorists, but most forensic experts say there was no shot from the front.

Woody Specht, an FBI spokesman in Dallas who has dealt with the Kennedy case for nearly a decade, said simply: "You really need to evaluate the source on these types of things."

- *This article is based in part on wire service reports.*



AP

Ricky White with a photo of the presidential motorcade before claiming yesterday that his father killed John Kennedy.

AP

The late Roscoe White in a 1963 photo. His son says he was a CIA agent when he shot President Kennedy.